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CD NO. [REDACTED]

COUNTRY Guatemala/Nicaragua

DATE DISTR. 16 Feb 1949

SUBJECT Intelligence Mission of Guatemalan Army

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE  
ACQUIRED [REDACTED]

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REPORT NO.

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1. The Guatemalan Army Chief of Staff, Col. Jose Magdalena Ortega, acting under orders received directly from Major Jacobo Arbenz, Guatemalan Minister of Defense, sent a secret agent into Nicaragua during December 1948 to report on the following objectives:
  - a. The attitude of Gen. Somoza toward Guatemala.
  - b. Any financial or military aid Somoza may be receiving from foreign sources.
  - c. The strength of the armed forces of Nicaragua and the type of armament in use.
  - d. The number and type of military aircraft.
  - e. Troop dispositions, the training of reserves, and concentration of troops in Puerto Cabezas.
  - f. The activities of Julio Lopez Masagoza, reportedly a purchaser of arms for Somoza.
2. The agent returned to Guatemala City on 21 December 1948, and immediately submitted a written report, a summary of which follows:
  - a. Somoza is unfriendly to Guatemala, and his animosity toward President Arevalo is a matter of common knowledge. His attitude, however, is purely defensive and it is not believed that he is planning any military offensive against Guatemala.
  - b. No evidence was obtained of any financial or military aid from outside sources being given to Somoza. Current rumors have circulated in Nicaragua that shipments of arms arrived in Puerto Cabezas for the Nicaraguan government from the Dominican Republic.
  - c. The armed forces of Nicaragua are estimated at 8000 officers and men, well-trained and in possession of the same kind of arms as used by the Guatemalan Army.
  - d. The Nicaraguan air force is estimated at 65 to 70 planes and includes

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Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C

DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

Auth: DDA REG-77-1763

Date: 1999/09/09 : CIA-RDP82-00457R002300000000000000

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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-2-

AT-6 trainers, DC-3's, B-17's, P-38's and B-24's. With the exception of two B-24's, the specific number of each type is not known.

- e. Principal troop concentration is at La Curva, Somoza's official residence. In December considerable troops were sent to the Department of Rivas on the Costa Rican frontier. No training of reserves was noted, and the garrison at Puerto Cabezas was estimated from three to five hundred members of the Guardia Nacional.
- f. The agent reported that Julio Lopez Masagosa, a Spanish Communist, associated with Rafael Calderon Guardia, is known to have attended reunions of Costa Rican exiles in Managua held at the home of the Nicaraguan congressman Luis Felipe Hidalgo. Present at these meetings were the following: Col. Pencho Fernandez, Col. Juan Vega, Major Claudio Fonseca and his brother Fernando, the Cuban Col. Juan Jose Tavio, a woman Communist named Lala Gonzales, and a man named Dr. Patino.

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